# Education tax pinches \$23 more

by Eric Elstone

Halton Hills residents can expect to pay about \$23 more in school taxes this year, according to town treasurer Ray King.

Using preliminary figures a Georgelown homeowner will pay the least at \$320. Esquesing the most at \$323 and Acton in the middle at \$321.

The mill rate combines the financial needs of the elementary and high schools in each area. In Georgelown the mill rate is 56.77 which when multiplied by an average home assessment of \$5,638 produces the tax amount

Acton's mill rate is 71.46 with an assessment of \$4,498. Esquesing's assessment is put at \$4,638 and

the mill rate is 69.77.

Last year the Georg stown homeowner paid \$297 in school taxes, Esquesing \$300 and Acton about \$297.

Final figues on the education tax depend on the setting of the region's levy, Mr. King said. Halton Hills may strike its budget this week. Halton Board of Education approved its \$93,781,195 budget Thursday, but only after

three tries at changing the figures. Most of the money is spent on wages-teachers and other staff-plant operation.

Slightly more than half the revenue-50.58 per cent-comes from provincial grants while 46 per cent comes out of Halton taxpayers' wallets. Sources for the balance of the revenue include tuition fees, rentals, and property sales.

While the percentage of provincial government grants is down for elementary and secondary schools this year, the number of dollars coming into Halton from Queen's Park is up.

There is a total of \$2.85 million more dollars for Halton this year from the province for elementary and high schools. That figure, because of the increase in the size of the school budget, however represents slightly less than last year's percentage.

General legislative grants produce revenue representing 50.50 per cent of total expenditures this year compared to last year's

51.41 per cent. Of the \$43 million which municipalities share responsibility in raising, Halton Hills pays 11.77 per cent, Milton 9.43, Oakville 34.45 Fairfield proposed that all elementary and Burlington 44.35.

Oakville separate school trustee Len Auger failed in his bid to slice \$414,000 from the secondary school costs to bring it in line with provincial ceilings. He said trends appear to have higher and higher costs while secondary school enrolment drops, Auger said. This is the first budget to see Halton slip above the provincial limit.

Board finance committee chairman Rev. Gary Morton said he could identify with Mr. Auger's sentiments, but continued by saying he did not know where that kind of money could be found. Another trustee, Burlington's Bill Priest-

ner, challenged the administration to run a tighter ship. "Perhaps the \$400,000 will be found through the year in the operation," he Another amendment would have seen the elementary school budget rise closer to the

provincial ceiling. Oakville trustee Anne Fairfield said because the elementary schools are some \$53 below the ceiling indicates the staff is not being used as best it may. Mrs.

schools have full-time secretaries, rather than part-time, so that principals, who now perform some secretary duties, can devote more time for their jobs. The amendment, which also failed, was aimed at small schools with no assistant principals.

Yet another amendment took aim at the question of whether a new board of trustees is bound to their predecessors' decisions. One part of the budget followed up an old needs assessment study which called for the hiring of a psychologist and four psychometricians, Total cost \$25,282.

Oakville trustee Len Crosier wanted the psych-item dropped from the budget. Discussion of his amendment revealed approval of the five people in the budget does not translate automatically into hiring. Board superintendent of special services Ron Chapman said no hiring was to be done until he returns to trustees with a specific request.

All trustees except Crosier and Oakville's Elsie Hilson voted in favor of passing the

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### Some drugs found pharmacy busted again

and enter thieves.

Halton Regional Police say the pharmacy's south door was again smashed during Saturday night's which netted thleves two bottles of Hycodan. No charges have been laid.

About \$200 worth of drugs was stolen from the same drug store on March B. Police link that theft with a drug overdose incident which sent 18 North Halton youths to hospitals.

Police charged two more Acton men in connection with the March 8 break in. Soon after the theft police arrested a woman and a

#### South of Acton No hookup for centre

The Rockwood ball park concession booth and washroom facilities remain on the present well and septic system. Eramosa Council has decided.

Costs of installing the municipal system the long distance, possibly encountering rock, are prohibitive at this time. It will cost an estimated \$7000 to do the job.

Township employees will install a fire hydrant close to the skating rink for convenient ice flooding. A T will be provided for future concession booth hook-up.

Acton Pharmacy was man with break and again the target of break entry plus possession of stolen goods.

Eight Acton youths suffering drug effects Meanwhile police rewere taken to Georgecovered part of the loot from the first theft. Memorial Hospital the Behind an Acton home an evening after the breakofficer found about 200 in. Police suspect ten stu-Serax pills. About ten dents, on a school bus times that amount was believed in circulation after the theft.

from here and Milton. also suffered the effects of drugs. They were Two juveniles were taken to hospitals and also charged in the later released.

March 8 incident.

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### Chairman defends BIA's record, downtown defence "1978 has been some for the now traditional "If he keeps that up we outskirts, where Mr.

than the two previous years, but we have embarked on a number of projects," retiring Business Improvement Area board of management chairman Henry Stuchyra told about 50 members of the BIA and guests at the BIA's anmeeting last Wednesday.

He said the first improvement in 1978 was demolition of the Hotchen's building and construction of a parking lot, and arrangements were made for the beautification of Main St. S., necessary approvals. This has been settled now and work is to begin as soon as weather permits and a contractor found.

Third project undertaken was arrangements for entrance signs at all four entrances to Acton. They'll be two faced and cost. Remainder of the sent. money will be raised by design made and modi- up to 80. fied to meet Ministry of

ents. The BIA also provided pated in Back-to-Acton Days and the Santa Claus parade as well as employing two students for the summer under the summer employment program, which will be repeated in 1979.

Mr. Stachyra said promotional activities were not what he anticipated because the organization was too busy trying to get Mr. Sprackman out of their hair. He noted the BIA had been accused of overstepping their mandate, misusing BIA funds and lack of interest in delayed by failure to get settling the plaza issues, all charges which were

untrue, he said. Sprackman's statement that he asked to meet with the downtown merchants and only four people showed up was a miscalculation, the chairman said. "The meeting was arranged illuminated and land- between him and the BIA scaping will be done with executive and there were the BIA bearing half the actualty six of them pre-

Mr. Sprackman also different service clubs said he would provide 50 whose emblems will jobs with a plaza in the appear on the signs. Don east end of Acton, Mr. Lindsay co-ordinated the Stachyra said. When his project and reported co- proposal was turned operation from service down he came up with a clubs was good. A com- scaled down version and mittee has been formed, the number of jobs went

"The latest version Transportation and Com- was reduced even more," munication requirem- said Mr. Stachyra, "but the jobs climbed up to

what less spectacular Christmas bus, partici- will soon have full employment," he quipped. The retiring chairman

also took more swipes at

Mr. Sprackman's claims he would bring 7,000 customers a week into Acton with a new plaza. "I wonder where they would come from?" Stachyra asked. "Hisnew plaza in Georgetown would keep people there, traditionally Limehouse

leans to Georgetown and

Rockwood to Guelph, and

how many can you get

from Crewsons Corners? Mr. Stachyra said the plaza project turned into a crusade for the people of Acton but "His proposal is small enough to make money for him, yet it is hig enough to have serious consequences on the downtown. It has been pointed out to me, that a supermarket and a new bank on the outskirts would not only affect the present food stores, but it would also cause at least one downlown bank to close, and the others to

reduce their staff," Mr.

Stachyra said. "Net result of this would be a community with a small strip plaza on the outskirts, and a hollow core in the centre. I doubt that there would be any gain at all in the municipal revenue; in the number of jobs in Acton; or even in the shopping facilities. It would simply be a case of moving the business

Sprackman owns the land. The only gain would be a few parking spaces, most of them in the empty downtown," Mr.

Stachyra said. "These are the reasons for our opposition to the plaza, not because of fear of competition. We want competition where we can lay our hands on itdowntown! It has been done in other communities, and it can be done in Acton," Mr. Stachyra continued.

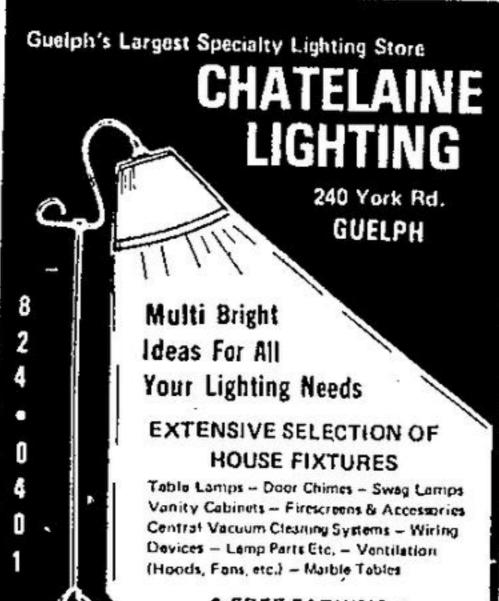
"However, it would be a mistake to consider the recent turn of events as a victory. We do recognize that we have deficiencies in shopping and parking facilities. Serious negotiations are now underway, to correct some of these problems. Your BIA board of management can only provide leadership, and coordination of individual efforts. The solution to our problems lies in individual effort and co-

operation," he said. "It was well expressed in a letter to the Free Press last week. The writer was generally unsympathetic to us, but he finished off by saying: "The BIA did not like what Mr. Sprackman had to offer. . .now do bet-

'We better heed this advice, and look at the present situation as an opportunity, perhaps the opportunity to do better," Mr. Stachyra concluded.

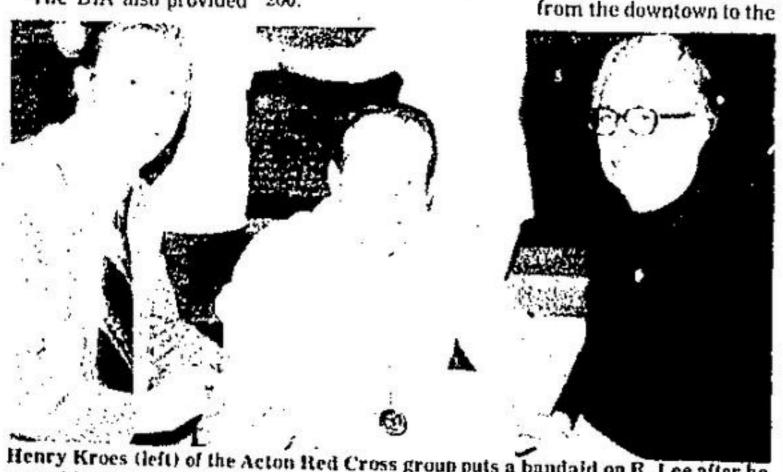


Bill Coats, left, discusses downtown Acton with architect Lloyd Sankey, right, who unveiled a plan to revitalize the downtown core at a BIA meeting last Wednesday.









Henry Kroes (left) of the Acton Red Cross group puts a bandald on R. Lee after he gave blood for the 36th time last Tuesday. Joan Ford of the Red Cross took the opportunity to present him with his 35th donation certificate.

## Best ever clinic

The Acton Red Cross group had their best-ever blood donor clinic last Tuesday, bringing in 182 pints of blood and 18 rejects.

Schriber pointed out a story on the front page of the Acton Free Press the week before the clinic was responsible for bringing in a goodly portion of the donors. Many, she said, saw the article explaining they may have to cancell all future clinics if more denors do not come out, and said they felt ashamed of

themselves.

All workers were very pleased with the clinic, said Mrs. Schriber. The clinic was such a success, she said, Public relations officer Alice head office in Toronto telephoned them offering congratulations.

At the last elinic, only 103 pints of blood were received with 17 rejects. Tuesday's clinic was sponsored by Halton Hills Furniture and Appliances and A-B Supermarket.

The next clinic will be held June 12 at the Acton Legion.



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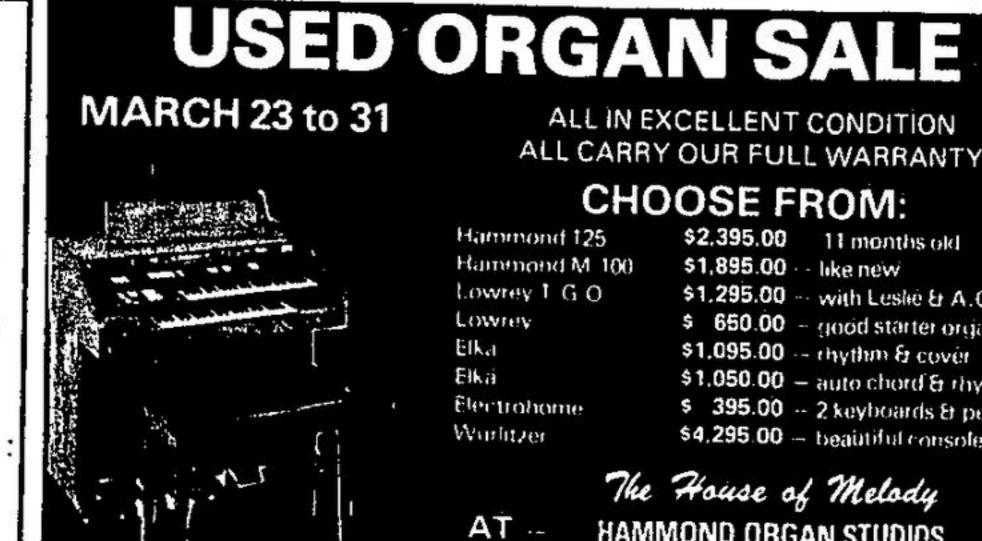
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